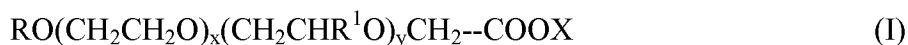


Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following amended paragraph:

[0009] Accordingly, the present invention relates to the use of ether carboxylic acids corresponding to general formula (I):



in which R is a saturated or unsaturated, branched or unbranched alkyl or alkenyl group containing 6 to 22 carbon atoms, x is a number from 1 to 20 and y is 0 or a number from 1 to 20, with the proviso that the sum of x and y is at least 1 and at most 25, and R¹ is an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms and X is a hydrogen atom or a monovalent or polyvalent ~~anion~~cation, in drilling fluids.

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

A ~~drilling fluid~~ well servicing composition containing an aqueous phase and an oil phase and an ether carboxylic acid of the formula:



wherein, R is a saturated or unsaturated, branched or unbranched alkyl or alkenyl group containing 6 to 22 carbon atoms, x is a number from 1 to 20 and y is 0 or a number from 1 to 20, provided that the sum of x and y is at least 1 and at most 25, R¹ is an alkyl group containing 1 to

4 carbon atoms and X comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, monovalent ~~anions~~cations and polyvalent ~~anions~~cations.